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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHURCH TO THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT.

WHATEVER inspiration there may lie in a literature that just now seems swinging from love to theology ; whatever instruction there may be in the researches into religion now being conducted by psychologists ; whatever confirmation of the hope of immortality there may lie in the recent report of the Society for Psychical Research—so far as organized Christianity is concerned, there is nothing comparable in importance with that uprising against social miseries that already amounts to a new crusade, and which, from every point of view, is critical for both the church and society.

What is a church? The word means today almost every sort of religious organization, from a mission to the Roman Catholic empire ; but the proper meaning of the word is two-fold. It is, first, that of a localized social group of men and women more or less organized, composed (at least constructively) of religious persons, who have associated themselves together for the purpose of incorporating the spirit and diffusing the teachings of Jesus. Its second use is that of a general conception which stands for organized Christianity in its universal and historical aspects. Whether such a definition as the first would include all forms of organized Christian activity as well as those popularly termed churches, we need not stop to inquire. It is enough to set forth the definition in broad lines, for such is and has been the expression of the ecclesiastical self-consciousness for centuries.

And what is the social movement? Without attempting to define all its various phases, it may be said to be the attempt now being made throughout Europe and America to bring greater happiness and possibility to the life of the so-called masses. In its most energetic form it appears as labor agitation, labor organization, philanthropic institutions like social

settlements, and, as much as in anything, in socialism. In such a ubiquitous and varied movement there are many things to condemn, many persons insincere. Social settlements and "slumming" too often supplant Browning societies as mere diversions of the hour; bescriptured philosophy and crude generalization about the social organism very often masquerade as sociology; but back of all such conscious or unconscious shams there is a determination to obtain social betterment that is not superficial, but sincere, and even passionate.

I.

At first glance it would seem as if there would be coöperation between such a movement and the church as a representative of the social teaching of Jesus, but it must be confessed that the relation of the two, as it actually exists, is one of mutual ignorance and distrust. On the part of the churches there is, it is true, an increasing effort to understand and to sympathize with the movement among the masses. Here and there men with the spirit of Maurice and Kingsley have endeavored to capture socialism bodily for the church. But such efforts have met with only partial success—the difficulty lying quite as much with the clergy as with the labor leaders. And so it has come to pass that the two great altruistic movements of the century have refused coöperation, mistrusting each other today almost as much as in the past; and, in consequence, each has lost the other's aid.

Earnest and noble as is the movement among the masses, it is suspicious, if not the enemy, of the churches. It is, in part, the frank expression of this fact that has caused so much ecclesiastical hostility to social leaders, the churches being convinced that no good could come from violent and blasphemous hands. Yet a closer knowledge of the actual attitude of the masses and their leaders might have led to a better understanding. The essentials of one age are often the bric-a-brac of its successor. The spinning-wheels and swords which were to our ancestors the symbols of toil and adventure, and even life itself, fill museums and adorn the walls of reception-rooms. Their

mission is past, and an age which they created, but by which they have been outgrown, regards them with curiosity rather than reverence. Similarly, to many men working at the cost of infinite sacrifice for their less fortunate fellows the churches are pieces of bric-a-brac. Useful in the life of the past, doubtless of the utmost value as agents in the production of the life of today, they are now judged no longer needed. The age is believed to have outgrown them, except as reminders of a less perfect civilization. The teachings of Jesus, it is true, Christian ethics, and to some degree Christian theology, are honored, even though they may be judged impracticable. But a regard for Christian ethics does not imply a regard for Christian churches. Many an honest man, both within and without the ranks of the laboring class, is convinced that the time has come for self-respecting philanthropists to cut loose from the churches and form themselves into more efficient organizations. Charges of hypocrisy are frequently made against the churches by men who are passionate champions of the teaching of Jesus. It is easy to exaggerate, but it certainly seems within the bounds of probability that, wholly apart from a materialistic hostility to supernaturalism, the majority of workingmen and their leaders, of socialists, and of professional sociologists are convinced that the churches at present are composed of the well-to-do fraction of the community; that clergymen as a class have little or no sympathy with economic reform; that political corruption is condoned in the case of wealthy church members; and that it is useless to expect anything more of churches than that they will become religious clubs, limiting their support of social reform to words, to denominational missions, and conventional Sunday morning collections, untrue to the ideals of Jesus, as centers of social convalescence worthless.

But something even more unpleasant must be said. Below this distrust of the church as a social institution is a disregard for religion. The most important factors in the social awakening, socialism and sociology, at least in the past have been predominantly materialistic, and, if not aggressively atheistic, somewhat patronizing in their attitude toward the deity. It may be that at

present, as Professor Nash has recently said, "the deeper socialism of England and America is looking toward, if it has not already entered into, a religious phase," but at the best it has not yet undone its early work. The social movement (of course excepting the social work of Christian organizations) is irreligious. The faith of the church to it is other-worldliness, and of the existence of another world it has serious doubts. In the universe of matter it sees only impersonal forces and evolution, and, insisting with a recent writer in the *Westminster Review* that religion is loyalty to truth and goodness, it eliminates a personal God from the universe of morals, and the Jesus whom it honors is but a companion of Socrates and Lassalle.

And here one meets a phenomenon hard for the man reared in the atmosphere of traditional evangelicalism to credit.

Anti-ecclesiastical and even unreligious as the movement among the masses may be, its Messianic hope in the future is the creature of Christianity. Discontent is the child of idealism, and the demand for human betterment springs from a belief in the worth of the individual that is the gift, not of the primitive German, but of the Christian. Human brotherhood already is something more than a rhetorical flourish. And has not organized Christianity, through all its devious and too often unholy ways, held up that ideal? What period in which aristocracy has lifted its head without or within the church but has had also its St. Francis ready to cast home and parents and very garments away in devotion of Christian fraternity? In this light, the hostility of the social movement to the church is an Indian mutiny, in which men trained by imperial masters, in the name of love and justice, are turning their newly acquired discipline against their teachers; and the church of today must do something more than complacently praise its past and optimistically dream of its future, if it would not see too late that its influence and power have passed into other hands, less intelligent perhaps, but quicker to come to the aid of a discontented race.

This is no rhetorical crisis, painted black that presently the certain victory of the church may be the more brilliantly set forth. There are, happily, many churches and clergymen

excepted from such distrust, but even with this allowance one cannot say that the situation has been overdrawn. One can still mention a recent disposition among social writers to regard religion itself as a merely temporary basis of ethics; the constant tendency of our churches to follow the line of social cleavage; the decay of country churches; the steady growth of organizations like Salvation Armies, Young People's Societies, Christian Associations. Such facts do not portend the end of Christian morality. The ethical teachings of Jesus must stand and be operative as long as goodness is better than badness, and love more advantageous than hate. Nor is there any likelihood that churches as institutions will disappear. The danger is lest the churches as religious organizations shall cease to be of any social service or significance.

And this brings us to the heart of the matter. Without attempting to justify this criticism or to eulogize or blame the discontent from which it springs, let us put the matter frankly and distinctly: Is such distrust legitimate? Has the Christian church as a social institution any significance for a movement which is preëminently ambitious to elevate the classes that as yet have had comparatively little share in a Christian civilization?

II.

The conditions of the problem themselves indicate the responsibilities which the church must assume. The church must recognize that its fundamental mission is religious—dynamic, and not regulative. "Sometimes," says Mr. Bryce in his *American Commonwealth*, "standing in the midst of a great American city . . . one is startled by the thought of what might befall this huge yet delicate fabric of laws and commerce and social institutions were the foundation it has rested on to crumble away. Suppose that all these men ceased to believe there was any power above them, any future before them, anything in heaven or earth but what their senses told them of; . . . Would men say, 'Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die'? Or would custom, and sympathy, and a perception of the advantages which stable government offers to the citizens, as a whole,

and which orderly self-restraint offers to each one, replace supernatural sanctions and hold in check the violence of masses and the self-indulgent impulses of the individual? History, if she cannot give a complete answer to this question, tells us that hitherto civilized society has rested on religion, and that free government has prospered best among religious peoples."

It would be impossible to deny the truth in this generalization, as will presently appear, but it should be clearly understood that the significance of the church to society is something more than that of a check upon crime and materialism. Its mission is not that of a policeman.

Even the authority of tradition, for which the church has been commonly held to stand, is but regulative and conservative, too often quick to hold by the form while despising the spirit. Precedent is the stumbling-block as well as the foundation of progress. However much one may appreciate the service which the Roman church rendered civilization in furnishing the immutable center about which for centuries the elements of a new Europe might gather; however much one may honor that devotion to the persistent elements of religious life that finds its expression in the Anglican's devotion to his prayer-book and bishop; however much one may honor the steady independence of Nonconformists of all sorts, one must at the same time say that, in the same proportion as he has preferred to check rather than create Christian impulses, Catholic, Anglican, and Nonconformist has been untrue to the highest conception of the duty owed by the church to the society in which he lived. If tradition be all for which it can stand in society, it will be hard indeed to prophesy perpetuity for the church. To plead its conservative capacity is possible only after one has established other and stronger presumptions in its favor. It cannot be content to make good citizens. They must make good men. That which is the salt of the earth is likewise to be its leaven.

However multiform the service the churches may and must render human society in a Christian age, such service must be unqualifiedly religious. It must furnish the spiritual material; the age itself will provide the institutional forms. In the divi-

sion of labor that characterizes society today, the school, the state, the bank has its special duties. In the same way the church, as the plain purport of the words of Paul implies, has but one supreme mission, and that is the religious. However much a church may employ charitable organizations, amusements, employment bureaus, a consciousness of this spiritual mission must be its coördinating and unifying force. It is to the honor of most "institutional churches," so needed in every city and country town, that, even more clearly than many of the older sort, they make religion supreme. But to make a church a religionless mixture of civil-service reform, debating societies, gymnasiums, suppers, concerts, stereopticon lectures, good advice, refined negro minstrel shows, and dramatic entertainments, is to bring it into competition with the variety theater. And when the masses have to choose between that sort of church and its rival, if they have any sense left within their perplexed heads, they will choose the variety theater. That at least is performing its proper social function.

III.

But as a religious organization the church is especially fitted to educate and direct the social impulses, both within itself and within society at large. And in two ways: by enforcing regard for law, and by guaranteeing sanity in reform.

1. It can keep social impulses law-abiding.

Periods of transition, we are repeatedly told, may easily become revolutionary; but quite as dangerous, in some ways more dangerous, to a society than open revolution is the spirit of contempt for law. Our day is marked by a decrease in actual armed revolts, but, none the less, law is still held in too little regard. As it is made with astonishing ease and volume, so is it as easily and universally despised. The governor of Illinois has declared recently that he proposed to prevent by force a mining company's importation of negro workmen into Virden, Illinois, on the ground that it is sometimes necessary for an executive of a state to enforce law in advance of its legislative enactment, while the labor officers maintain that they may resort to bloodshed because

the company has no right to import bad negroes as substitutes for strikers. Company, men, negroes, governor, so far as newspaper accounts can be trusted, carry on their struggle as if laws might be enforced or forgotten to suit one's need. In our cities, municipal statutes are ignored and broken by those who have "pulls," while who has not been, wittingly or unwittingly, an accessory to forgery in the use of railroad tickets bought of "scalpers"?

This superiority to the will of society which justifies disobedience whenever disobedience appears desirable is especially characteristic of those persons who are the avowed champions of society. Sometimes, indeed, the individualistic spirit is undisguised, and we have anarchists pure and simple. But men who are not anarchists do not hesitate to hold the will of the individual superior to the will of a community. The very nobility of an avowed end is judged a sufficient excuse for disobeying law. The anti-ecclesiastical spirit of too much effort for social betterment is accompanied by an anti-legal spirit. Having closed its ear to the voice of God, it hears the voice of the people only when it chooses.

To such a spirit the church as a social institution has something better to impart than ethical platitudes. It, too, has suffered from unrighteous laws; it, too, has felt the pressure of its own ideals pushing it toward a disregard of law. Sometimes, perhaps, it has too much yielded to the power of precedent and to God-ordained powers. But its slowness in rising against injustice has been the deliberation of preparation. Not by violence or contempt of law has it been resultful, but by a patience that has linked submission with such transforming power that unjust laws have been repealed or have fallen into desuetude, to be replaced by others breathing mercy and justice. Perishing by the sword, its chief victories have been won by peace and love. The blood of its martyrs has been the seed of new legislation and new government. Nor could it be otherwise. That recognition of the whole of things which is the metaphysical formula for religion does not permit the man who has come within the influence of the church to arrogate to himself

discretionary power as to what laws should be obeyed and what may be disobeyed. Authority always is an element in religion. In part it is because of the deep reverence felt by the church for law as the earthly analogue of the will of God that reformers oppose it, slandering it as committed to reaction, because it refuses to join in an orgy of iconoclasm. But who will dare say that in its reverence for law the church is wrong? Better a law-abiding spirit and bad laws than anarchy, however disguised or procrastinating. If there is one lesson above all others that social enthusiasts need to learn, it is that born of the church's experience: a regard for law, even though it be unjust law, is the first guarantee of progress, of legal reform, and of the permanence of the good law that may replace the bad. Besides the church, so far as I can see, there is no institution, state or school, court or prison, capable by history, nature, ideals, and martyrs of enforcing this unpalatable but indispensable truth.

2. The church, better than any other popular institution, can guarantee sanity in reform. To respect law is not to champion passive obedience, but the greatest danger that threatens today's life is not unemployed laborers, but unemployed reformers. From all sides they come. Young women on fire to prevent the abuse of children by cruel and tyrannical parents; college men and women who long to win the submerged tenth to sweetness and light and the appreciation of art by residence in a university settlement during three weeks in the winter after graduation; men with all sorts of social panaceas, from a new method of reading music at sight to tin dinner pails; temperance reformers who tremble for the nation if a war vessel is christened with champagne; diet, drink, clothes, house, school, church, Bible, street-cleaning reformers — all promising millennia, and all taking themselves seriously. Far be it from anyone to disparage the motives of such enthusiasts, but, with the remembrance of the similar altruistic hysteria that preceded the French Revolution of 1789, one cannot help seeing the danger that lies in unregulated and visionary amateur philanthropy. Far more worthy of serious study is the danger attending the fanaticism of professional reformers. Millennial programs are easy to print, but as

difficult as the genius of the *Arabian Nights* to control—if indeed they once miss the broad way leading to the limbo of impracticability. What is worse is that the conservative is not mistaken when he sees in their champions not merely earnest men and women striving for the good of mankind, but possible social firebrands. Agitators are indispensable, but an agitator mad with altruism is as dangerous as any other madman.

Perhaps an acquaintance with such facts should have made surprise impossible, but none the less it is surprising that leaders in the social movement should not have seen how extravagance injures their cause. An admirable evidence of this fact, as well as the efficiency of sane efforts at reform, is to be seen in the history of woman's suffrage. Perhaps a better illustration is to be seen in the history of social democracy in Germany. But the socialist himself can learn lessons in the methodology of social reform from the church. With all its demands, socialism today proposes nothing like the radical change in society as did Jesus when he swept away Mosaism and pointed the way to an ideal social order in which men should be sons of God and brothers of each other; nor does any declaration of the rights of man contain more than a shadow of the equality that bursts out in the words of the apostolic radical of the first century who confronted an age steeped in slavery and inequality with the Magna Charta of a new age: in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free. Yet in Jesus and in Paul radicalism in teaching was tempered by sanity in method. Jesus dared to lay down his life and—what must have been harder—the life of his followers while preventing a revolutionary and unintelligent effort to realize his new social order. Paul sent the converted slave Onesimus back to his Christian master, and counseled women not to let their equality deprive them of veils. The spirit of the church was equally sane, and its sanity quite as much as its love carried its regenerating influence from the upper room in Jerusalem to every corner of the empire. As a social institution, while as earnest as any group of men in the world, the church still can show men that, if individualism is not anarchy, reform is not that virtue of madmen, iconoclasm.

From the days when Paul counseled his Corinthian brethren not to turn their prayer-meetings into bedlams, down through the days of Ambrose agitating and yet restraining the masses of Milan; the mediæval church tempering universal feud by the truce of God; St. Bernard directing the military spirit of empires; Thomas à Becket defying the passions of a hot-headed Englishman; Luther denouncing the extravagances of a Peasants' Revolt; Wesley utilizing the enthusiasms of Methodism; and Moody bridling the impetuosity of college students, the church has said, by word and example: Let reforms come; make reforms come; but let everything be done decently and in order. Until there can be shown some other social institution or movement which can boast an equal record of permanent social reforms—of slavery ended, of life protected, of woman ennobled, of children educated, of homes sanctified, of schools, and missions, and charities, and martyrs—your social reformer had best give himself a course in church history. There he will learn something of the effectiveness that comes to a reform through the sanity bred within the Christian church he affects to regard as outgrown. Contempt is here the sign manual of ignorance and conceit.

IV.

The church can aid the social movement by emphasizing its own method of social regeneration.

Within the region of philosophy there are few questions more delicate or elusive than those which concern the relations of the individual to society. Indeed, one might almost say that the terms themselves are still in search of definition. None the less, two things are increasingly evident: the individual is of worth, and the individual is complete, only as his life is joined with the lives of others. These two considerations are at present claimed as among the chief foundations of the multicolored social philosophy and social propaganda which go under the name of socialism, and it is the earnestness of the socialist's efforts, on the one hand to convince society at large that the proletariat has souls, and on the other to raise society as a unit into a

good-natured deity, that gives it much of its efficiency. Now, with economic programs of all sorts a church as an organization, if it be wise, will have nothing to do; but with socialism's demand for economic justice; with its unquenchable determination to secure for all, however humble, the rights and enjoyments of common humanity; with its insistence upon fraternity, a church is profoundly concerned. For—it may well be repeated—the spirit that lies back of this better ambition of socialism is the child of the Christian church—a prodigal, perhaps, strayed far from home and into strange companionship, but none the less a child. But the Christian church has a doctrine of the individual that no hard and fast system of socialism, however noble and ethical, can duplicate, if, indeed, as a matter of self-preservation, accept. The final test of a system's worth lies not so much in what it proposes as in what it presupposes. Socialism and Christianity are alike in that they are both laboring for a new and higher social order, in which all—men, women, and children—shall live better and happier lives; but they are unlike in the position each takes as to the relation of these individuals to society. Although there is untruth in any antithesis, the difference can be roughly stated as this: socialism expects society to make good individuals; Jesus expects good individuals to make a good society. The untruth in such an antithesis lies in its disregard of the fact that socialism does not ignore the need of an ethical basis of social life, and of the other fact that Christianity is oblivious neither of the influence of environment nor of the need of law. But after this common element has been eliminated, the differences in the presuppositions may still be stated in terms of the individual: socialism assuming that the individual must be raised through his connection with a better social order, Christianity assuming that it is impossible to have a good social order composed of bad men. Thus the point of attack, so to speak, is, in the case of socialism, environment, and in the case of Christianity, the individual.

Now, at this point one is likely to be prejudiced, if, like the writer, he is not a socialist. There are, of course, Christians who are socialists, and—what is quite another matter—socialists

who are Christians. Indeed, it is not uncommon to hear men identify socialism and Christianity. But after guarding, as best I can, against prejudice, and judging the two from their most significant elements, if words mean anything and there be any distinction between the two, the position of Christianity seems more capable of producing permanent social betterment than does socialism. The church has chosen the slower and more difficult method; for it is always easier to attempt reform by legislation than by the education and conversion of individual lives. It would, indeed, be untrue to facts to say that much good cannot be accomplished by legislation that expresses the sentiments of an intelligent and righteous minority, but a study of such reformatory and prohibitive legislation will convince any man that it succeeds in something like the proportion of influential men in a community who are in sympathy with its objects. There is here not merely a question of regard for law sufficient to lead to its conventional enforcement, but also the question as to whether a good law enforced by a part of a community is ideally so desirable as such an elevation in the personal character of each citizen as makes such a law unnecessary. If it be replied that the social will must always be in advance of a considerable number of individuals, the original question is again presented: granted such must be the case, which is likely to be of more permanent social service, a belief that the chief effort should be made to make the individual good through social environment, or to produce such men and women as will themselves constitute a proper society? It is easy to reply that both are needed, but such an answer leaves the point at issue undecided, and if the alternative be frankly met as it actually exists, the answer seems to favor the philosophy of the church. Its method has one great advantage: to use a printer's term, it does not throw society into "pi" as the first step toward recombinations. Utopias presuppose utopians, and the church undertakes the production of utopians.

And in another particular the social doctrine of the church is superior in its practical bearings upon the individual to that of socialism. I know that the socialist will strenuously deny the

statement, but, do the best it can to avoid the criticism, socialism is essentially an economic system and approaches the individual life with much the same presupposition as did the older political economy it assails. And that presupposition is the existence of an "economic man." In a word, socialism says this: Make the economic man prosperous, and the moral, the altruistic, the intellectual, the æsthetic, and (as a concession) the religious man will inevitably be prosperous. Here again indiscriminate criticism is unwise. No one can deny the influence of economic conditions upon the character of men, and the Christian who follows the better impulses of his nature will make common cause with any rational effort at producing greater economic equality. Indeed, if once socialism as a merely economic program according to which some or all industries were to become socialized, were seen to be just and best, there is no reason why Christians should not accept it. But as homeopathy as practiced today is one thing, and homeopathy as Hahnemann worked it out is another, so socialism as a form of economic life and socialism as an all-embracing philosophy of social reform are not to be confounded. Good economic surroundings, so far as ordinary observation shows, are in no way the guarantee of good or even contented men, and as a working theory of life the position of Jesus is not only more philosophical, but more practicable: "Seek first the fraternity of the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and food, clothes, and creature comforts will follow." It may very well be that a thoroughly Christian civilization will be—at least partially—socialistic. It is not so clear that a socialistic state would be Christian.

At the same time it must be granted that, as both are today, the church has much to learn from socialism. It is hard to say it, but the church has hardly yet the clear vision which enables socialism to see the moral aspects of today's economic life. Yet such a charge must certainly soon be removed. The fact that it unfortunately is composed of certain strata of society may retard its action, but it is impossible that the church should not soon see the inconsistency between its religious

teachings as to the supreme worth of each individual soul in God's sight and any form of oppression, whether ecclesiastical or economic. A Christian man has no excuse for corrupting legislatures or for stealing property, by whatever euphemistic synonym such acts may be described. He cannot be true to the Christ he serves if he wantonly neglects the rights of others, whether competitors or employés.

But to say this is not to give up the church, nor to despair of the salvability or the fundamental justice of a regulated competition. It is simply to say that justice and goodness are superior to business success; it is but to paraphrase the words of Jesus, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," "Make friends through the mammon of unrighteousness." It is high time that the historic church already crowned with centuries of beneficence; which, however slowly, has for centuries been molding economic life to the pattern of its Master; which has produced the only stable material out of which socialism can hope to build a new society, should challenge socialism to say why it arrogates to itself a monopoly of love for the masses, and challenge it again to say whether, instead of the Christian nation of kings and priests, its social regeneration through economic comfort will produce anything better than smug, selfish respectability, a comfortable but heroless mediocrity.

V.

The church can aid all efforts at social betterment by producing religiously regenerate lives. A church does not, it is true, regenerate a man, and were the purpose of this paper theological, it would be necessary to make the language more exact. But, however more exactly it might be expressed, the duty of the church remains. Its office is not that of a school, but of a home into which new sons and daughters are continually being born. It, and it alone, of all social institutions is capable of furnishing the individuals out of which a good society can be built.

The Christian ideal of the individual is social. A man cannot conform to the example of Jesus unless his life be joined consciously to others. The spontaneity with which Chris-

tians have always crystallized into the social groups of school and state and church, as well as the social reforms that have always accompanied its religious revivals, abundantly evidence this fact. But the church, except as its zeal for others has too often committed it to a pauperizing charity, has never flattered men into believing that their miseries were simply the result of environment. It has dared to cut deep into the heart of that lie, and to teach that sin is at the bottom of misery. But it does something more—it defines sin as the voluntary withdrawal of a man from his normal life with God and fraternal life with men. Irreligion, it holds, lies behind social iniquities. Then, having clearly in mind the disease, it undertakes the remedy. By the interpretation of God through human love, it shows men the way to that religious environment that is the source of righteousness. By the story of its Christ it inspires men to sacrifice in social service. As sin is selfishness, so righteousness is fraternity. The great ecclesiastical doctrine of regeneration has, therefore, a social application, not by accommodation, but by necessity. Regeneration is nothing more than the change of a man's life from insulation to social union. He is a son of God, and therefore a brother of men. In the Christian sense, therefore, to produce regenerate individuals is inevitably to produce a regenerate society. Goodness in the Christian sense is social, not monastic. To determine the forms in which this social goodness shall express itself does not fall within the power of the church as an institution. Reforms are for church members, not churches. Any economic or political expedient that will best and most effectively express Christian fraternity will be supported by Christian church members if only their heads are as clear as their hearts are warm.

And it is precisely here that evangelical religion is resultful as a social force. We may well thank Unitarianism and ethical societies for their insistence upon morality and rational faith. But with all possible respect for their profound theological influence, with notable exceptions, they cannot be said to have exercised wide influence over the masses. The age today, as never before, knows the right, but needs the power to do the right.

The so-called liberal movement, while justly criticising evangelicalism in the old, crude, popular sense, has confused religion with ethical culture, and, with all its undeniable services as a corrective of a too often irrational orthodoxy, lives institutionally today largely by the adoption of dissatisfied products of evangelicalism. Morality has little power of inspiration in comparison with religion. God is more dynamic than truth, and it is in the religious procreativity of evangelical churches, notwithstanding the sneer of Matthew Arnold, that the solution of social problems will largely rest. What new sort of humanity the future may have in store one cannot, of course, foresee, but, with all respect for a current belief to the contrary, so long as men continue to resemble the men of the past, it is certain that a churchless society and a religionless morality mean social and moral degeneration. If the social movement has any respect for the results of experience, it will not disregard this fact. At the very least, it must count upon religious men and women as the central force of any reform or reformed social life.

VI.

And thus we arrive at a conclusion which is neither novel nor sensational: the church is not outgrown, for it furnishes its age regenerating social influences in the shape of men and women whose hearts are fraternal because they are religious. But it does more. These men and women, who serve their fellows because they love and fear their God, are not sent forth altogether altruistic dilettantes and untrained enthusiasts. The church is a social institution—or better, each church is a little social group, a microcosm of society itself. To belong to a church that is worthy of the name is to be trained in the art of social, not individualistic, living. A genuinely Christian church member is always material ready at hand for any rational social movement, and if a census were made of those who are effectively connected with social, municipal, and national reforms, it is no very rash statement that the large majority of such persons would be found to have come, either personally or through family example, under the influence of some church. It could not be

otherwise. The simple fact is that, while men dream and agitate, the church is creating and organizing altruistic and religious impulses, is training men to live together in mutual recognition of each other's rights, and compelling them to recognize social as well as individual units. In a word, as exemplified in the Christian church, religion breeds and disciplines *corporate enthusiasms*. Can the social movement afford to despise it?

VII.

But a word must be added as to the duty of the church. If it would be as significant as its past and its Founder make possible, it can no longer preach an individualistic salvation. It must educate the social sympathies of its children; it must teach that the question of right and wrong must have its answer from the counting-room as well as from the pulpit; it must train its members to trust their Christian impulse to side with whatever cause is true and beautiful and sane; it must teach that, if there can be no regenerate society without regenerate men, neither can there be regenerate men without a regenerate society. And therefore, for the sake of all, it must fulfill its central duty of throwing into an irreligious but generous age a host of sons and daughters filled with the fraternal enthusiasm of its Founder. This is the evangelicalism that our age needs: not merely the gospel of a man's saving his soul, but the gospel of the kingdom of God. Let men be reborn, not that they may by and by get comfortably into a heaven above the earth, nor yet as a matter of duty or penance perform good deeds on earth; but rather let men be reborn that, just because of their new natures which draw love from God himself, they may constitute a better social environment and a better humanity here on earth. In a word, through becoming sons, let Christians remember that they have become brothers.

SHAILER MATHEWS.

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